

# Department of Human Services

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## Articles in Today's Clips Tuesday, May 15, 2007

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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# Upper Peninsula video stores help Michigan foster children

**IRON MOUNTAIN** — More than 4,000 children in Michigan are either waiting for their adoption to be finalized or waiting for a family.

Most of these children, whose parental rights have been terminated, are among those hardest to place — kids who are older and members of minorities and/or sibling groups. Adoption for older youth in the foster care system is a priority to ensure they do not leave the foster care system without a connection to a supportive adult.

Forty of these children are featured in a photographic exhibit called the Michigan Heart Gallery. The Michigan Heart Gallery, a collaborative effort between the Michigan Adoption Resource Exchange, the Adoptive Family Support Network and the Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), seeks to bring our community closer to the faces and voices of children waiting for a "forever family."

The Michigan Heart Gallery features portraits of Michigan's waiting children who come from various regions of the state and are representative of different races and ages.

This exhibit visited the Iron Mountain and Escanaba areas this spring. Although the exhib-

## HEART GALLERY

- A photographic display of children available for adoption.
- Copies of a promotional DVD available for viewing at Family Video.

it has moved on to tour the rest of Michigan, Family Video is keeping the Heart Gallery available and accessible by providing, at no cost, copies of a promotional DVD.

This DVD features the photographs from the exhibit, video of children who are waiting to be adopted and information about the adoption process for families who are ready to begin the process.

"We are very pleased to help the Heart Gallery campaign promote adoption for children needing homes," said Allison Neumann, Iron Mountain Family Video store manager. Heart Gallery DVDs will be available at all Family Video stores in Iron Mountain, Houghton, Menominee,

Negaunee, Marquette and Escanaba.

The photographs in The Heart Gallery were taken by more than 40 professional photographers who donated their time, talent and resources to take portraits that help capture the spirit of children in the foster care system.

The Heart Gallery allows these children to be seen in an artistic, poignant and tasteful photographic exhibit.

The kids enjoyed their photo shoot experience. Some children were able to help select which portrait to feature in The Heart Gallery, while others came up with their own poses and some were given lessons in photography during the photo shoot, allowing them to become budding photographers themselves.

Additional information on adoption can be obtained by contacting the Region 1 DHS office in Escanaba at 906-786-4400 or writing to Region 1 at 305 Ludington St., Escanaba, Michigan, 49829.

For more information about the Michigan Heart Gallery and how you can get involved, call 1-800-589-6273.

WZZM13 ONLINE - ABC TELEVISION for ALL OF WEST MICHIGAN

# Holland church volunteer sentenced for molesting girls

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A former Holland church volunteer is going to prison for molesting two girls.

51-year-old Eric Vander Yacht was sentenced Tuesday morning to 15 to 45 years.

Vander Yacht molested a 9-year-old girl last October at Calvary Reformed Church and another girl the year before.

He pleaded guilty to three counts of sexual assault, possession of child pornography, and participating in child sexual abuse.

Web Editor: [WZZM ONLINE](#).

Web Editor: [Chris Fleszar](#), Managing Editor



Eric Vander Yacht

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## 4C child care agency gets Ruth Mott grant

HOMETOWN HEADLINES

**GENESEE COUNTY**

**THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION**

Monday, May 14, 2007

**By Ron Fonger**

**rfonger@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6317**

GENESEE COUNTY - A \$64,200 grant from the Ruth Mott Foundation will pay for emotional health screenings for 400 children under age 5 who don't currently receive them.

4C Child Care Unlimited will coordinate the project to assess the children's emotional well-being and to connect families with prevention, risk reduction or treatment services, according to a news release.

Screenings are being done at several sites around the county, including Hamilton Community Health Network and Flint Odyssey House.

Details: 4C, (810) 232-0145.

- Ron Fonger

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# The County Press

## Super Mom: Jeans is 'the queen bee'

by JENNIFER J. DECKER  
STAFF REPORTER

Cathy Jeans is proof love paves the way.

This Mother's Day, she is called mom 12 times over with a story that involves lots of kids.

And she wouldn't have it any other way.

Jeans has three biological children: Todd Irwin, Tony Irwin, and Lisa Ginther. As a one-time single parent, Jeans welcomed seven more children into the family, all who had been abused or neglected: Brandon Irwin, Amanda Hargrif, Megan Robinson; the late Kara Irwin; Nick Irwin, Bob Irwin, and Janelle Irwin.

But Jeans didn't stop there. She ended up marrying Randy, her high school sweetheart, and they had two children, Tammie and Tony Jeans. The couple has a combined 12 children and 14 grandchildren.

The family wanted to surprise Cathy with this story, so she couldn't be interviewed. Instead, Caroline Ostrander, girlfriend of Cathy's son, Brandon, contacted The County Press.

For several years, Cathy worked for the Tuscola County Adoption Association. She eventually became president, putting into action the life she lived and the cause she supported.

"After having three biological children of her own—Lisa, Todd, and Tony—she adopted seven children who were in need of her tender love and care," Ostrander wrote. "With never a dull moment in the Irwin Jeans house, the family stuck together and have considered each other brothers and sisters ever since. Cathy should be recognized for her strength, courage, determination and her ever-so-caring heart. No child in Cathy's house ever went without...Every family member is warm-hearted and welcoming. There is no doubt of the love they share with each other.

"I asked Cathy if there was ever a time when she thought of giving up or had been too frustrated to keep going," Ostrander wrote. "Cathy replied, 'I just kept doing what I knew I had to do.' Considering she had three in diapers and on bottles at one time I'm sure she didn't have time to think."

Brandon, Ostrander's boyfriend and one of Cathy's adopted sons, recalled growing up in the Hadley Township household where hand-me-downs were common and the family took up an entire church pew. At one point, the children of the household ranged in age from newborn to 15.

"We did a lot of babysitting," he said. "Mom worked at Jim's Restaurant in Oxford for her sanity and for money."

Brandon recalled Christmas in the house of 12 children was "chaotic." However, the flurry of activity made for an enriching family environment.

"There was never a dull moment. I have no idea how my parents did it. Looking back, it was all wonderful. We have a strong, tight-knit family and always ate dinner at the table together," he said.

Brandon added his mother has always been surrounded by children as she used to be a foster mother.

"I want to thank my mom for being the woman she is," Brandon said. "I went through severe abuse and wouldn't be here. She's the number one woman in my life and I love her to death. I am who I am because of my mom. She's the queen bee and we all love her."

Tony Irwin, one of Cathy's biological sons, recalled growing up in the big family.

"It was hectic. You'd better be there at dinner or it'd be gone. We always had what we needed and never went without much. We had a big van and got around pretty good," he said.

Tony was five when his mother decided to welcome seven more kids into the family through adoption and it never bothered him. Instead, he welcomed the chance to have more siblings.

"I was so young it didn't bother me much," he said. "I had more brothers and sisters so it was fine with me."

Tony also recalled Christmas fondly.

"It was crazy. It'd take at least a few hours to open presents and they'd take up half the basement," he said. "It was all good times. I don't think there was anything tough. I can always remember kids in my mom's house because she had 15 foster kids. I figure it was more kids to watch my back."

Cathy's husband, Randy, said his children, Tammie Jeans and Tony Jeans, knew Cathy's kids before the two families combined. Fate brought Cathy and Randy together after the two divorced different spouses.

"We've always been regimented," Randy said. "The kids had chores. All our vehicles were big and when it was dinner time we all sat down and ate. No matter where we went we took up a lot of everything. We always had well mannered kids we were complimented on. We had rules though and stuck to them."

For Mother's Day, Randy wanted to say to his wife: "Thank-you for the wonderful life. It's been an experience. I think it's her passport to heaven. The kids are our life and still are, so I guess God knows what He's doing."

Jennifer J. Decker can be reached at (810) 664-0811, Ext. 8125 or [jennifer.decker@lapeergroup.com](mailto:jennifer.decker@lapeergroup.com).

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# Niles Daily Star

## ONLINE EDITION

[Print Page](#)

Postal food drive surpasses other years

By KATHIE HEMPEL / Niles Daily Star  
*Tuesday, May 15, 2007 10:44 AM EDT*

NILES - Thanks to residents of Niles, this year's letter carrier's food drive surpassed all expectations. Approximately an additional 8,000 pounds of food, more than last year, were collected in Niles alone.

With the other five offices collecting an additional 2,000 pounds over and above 2006 totals, this year's food drive locally has an estimated total of over 53,888 pounds of food donated from the National Association of Letter Carriers local No. 775.

"We can't say enough about our local communities and all those who helped by allowing us to place some of the 200 yard signs on their lawns. We have exceeded our previous year by approximately 1,000 pounds in recent years, but 10,000 pounds? We are truly blown away." local publicity manager, Chris Cloud said.

"Amazingly, this was accomplished while short-handed with vacation season beginning and a few carriers out sick. We have to thank all those volunteers who helped the carriers," Cloud said.

This year there was more national publicity in addition to the local efforts with lawn signs and local media coverage.

The increased donations were not completely weighed-in until Monday morning and official totals both locally and for the national campaign are expected over the next couple of days.

Those mailing letters are reminded the postal rate increase of two cents went into effect Monday, with a letter now costing 41 cents.



05/14/2007

## Tri-County 4-H Camp applications available

The Huron Daily Tribune

Applications for Tri-County 4-H Camp are now available for the 2007 camp season. The Tri-County 4-H Camp will be conducted at Camp Stapleton, south of Port Sanilac for youth entering grades 3-8 in the fall of 2007. Four 4-H camps will take place July 11-13.

Living quarters include a kitchen, dining hall, recreation hall, cabins with restrooms, acres of outdoor recreation and unbelievable sunrises. Camp Stapleton is located on beautiful Lake Huron with wildlife and nestled on the shores of a truly "Great" lake.

These natural advantages are augmented by competent, trained staff: a nurse, qualified cook, camp director, waterfront director, MSU staff, and volunteer adult and teen counselors. They are licensed by the Department of Human Services.

A nurse is on the grounds at all times. Extreme care is given to guarantee the health and safety of every camper. The waterfront director and guards are on duty at all times when the campers are swimming. The cook provides well-balanced menus for the campers, and they have designated times for meals to be served.

4-H Camp offers a golden opportunity for 4-H'ers and youth of the tri-county area (Huron, Sanilac, and St. Clair) to share experiences in camping. Camp features swimming, skits, arts and crafts, campfires, friendships and various sports activities such as shooting sports, softball, volleyball and badminton.

The campers will be participating in all camp activities. They will learn citizenship and how to get along and live with others. Our main purpose is to get young 4-H'ers involved in an outdoor living experience. We want them to meet new people, swap ideas, and have a fun and educational experience at camp. Some of the educational sessions youth can participate in include animals (beef, llamas, rabbits and sheep), cake decorating, fishing, flower arranging, food and nutrition, geo-caching, jewelry making, photography, scrolling, sewing (pj bottoms), shooting sports, etc. The sessions are based on 4-H youth programs and are research-based.

Cost for youth to attend the Tri-County 4-H Camp is \$65 per youth enrolled in 4-H and \$75 for youth not enrolled in 4-H. Bus transportation will be provided for youth in Huron County and will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Bus transportation will cost an additional \$5 per camper.

Scholarship applications for youth to attend camp from the Kelly Rae Flannery Scholarship Fund (Interfaith Council) are available. These scholarships are for youth from families who are experiencing financial difficulties. The scholarship committee is very interested in identifying youth to attend our camp because the low cost to attend allows more youth to receive scholarships.

For more information or a 4-H Camp application, please contact Linda or Kari at the MSU Extension office in Huron County at (989) 269-9949.

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from the Midland Daily News

05/14/2007

## Services help many in need

The services of the Midland/Gladwin Chapter of the American Red Cross reached many residents in 2006. Below are various programs, along with the number of people helped in the chapter's 2006 fiscal year.

For information on receiving help, or to volunteer, call the chapter at (989) 631-3262 in Midland or (989) 426-7723 in Gladwin.

### Disaster Relief & Emergency Services

The local chapter offers disaster assistance in the form of food, clothing, shelter and other unmet emergency needs to victims of fires and other natural disasters if there are no other resources available. It also provides training programs in disaster preparedness and relief for volunteers interested in joining the Disaster Action Teams.

Services aided 25 families involved in emergencies with 20 dwellings, as well as setting up two mass care shelters serving 90 people in emergencies. Total mass care expenses and financial assistance to families topped \$19,000.

### Health & Safety Services

The Red Cross strives to help people lead safer and healthier lives through first aid, CPR and bloodborne pathogens training. The chapter also conducts swimming and lifeguard training, HIV/AIDS education, baby sitter training and teaches how to use automated external defibrillators to save victims of sudden cardiac arrest.

More than 5,300 people attended 645 CPR, First Aid or automated external defibrillator training in 2006. Also, more than 2,100 people received aquatics training during 220 programs.

### Services for military personnel and veterans

The Armed Forces Emergency Service serves members of the United States Armed Forces and their dependents living in Midland or Gladwin counties by providing basic emergency maintenance for spouses, assistance in obtaining allotments, notification due to family emergencies, assistance in obtaining emergency leave, extension of leave and humanitarian reassignment procedures.

The Red Cross can, in certain situations, provide financial assistance grants for emergency grocery orders or other basic emergencies for veterans with residency in Midland or Gladwin county.

More than 450 active military and veterans received assistance in 2006.

### Talking Newspaper

This is a service designed especially for the blind and visually impaired as well as handicapped residents of Midland and Gladwin counties that provides audio recordings of news and feature articles to clients that might not be available through radio and television.

The service created 503 recordings during 2006.

### Bringing Baby Home

This service provides "starter kits" of diapers, clothing and blankets for low- or no-income Midland County and Gladwin County newborns awaiting discharge from the hospital. Families must provide a referral card from Department of Human Services, Midland County Health Department, Visiting Nurses or the hospital social work department upon picking up the layette at the Red Cross office.

In 2006, the program assisted 31 families.

### Health Expense Last Resort Program

H.E.L.P. covers health-related items for which there is no known source of funding for residents of Midland County, one time only. It was designed to assist low-income families with health-related expenses such as medications, dressings, diabetic supplies, special shoes, equipment or emergency dental care up to \$150 for clients 19 and older.

More than 270 clients were served through the program in 2006, providing almost \$22,000 in assistance.

### **Safety Town**

The program provides positive safety skills -- including playground safety, poison and stranger awareness, basic home first aid and fire escape -- in this summer program for children who will enter kindergarten in the fall.

More than 300 children received safety training in the summer of 2006.

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# **Privatization Holding Up DHS Budget**

MIRS, May 14, 2007

The Senate version of the Department of Human Services (DHS) budget continues to sit in committee because legislators, the department and interest groups can't come to an agreement on what to do about privatizing certain services.

For several weeks, the DHS budget has been set to move, but has not. It was once again scheduled to be taken up this week, but the meeting was canceled. The problem is privatization.

The Senate has proposed privatizing the DHS' foster care and juvenile justice services for an estimated state savings of \$36 million with a General Fund savings of \$11 million.

However, the DHS says privatizing these services would actually cost the state money (See "**DHS Privatization: Cost Or Savings?**" 3/23/07). In March, the DHS estimated that the state would have to pay \$38 million more if the services were privatized. The DHS estimate also put an increase to the counties at \$26 million and the federal government at \$15 million.

Speaking on behalf of DHS Subcommittee Chair Sen. Bill **HARDIMAN** (R-Kentwood), Kelly **BARTLETT** said at this point, the cost to the counties appears to be the main sticking point.

"Sen. Hardiman has required time to continue to answer those questions," Bartlett said. "The funding part with the counties is extremely complicated."

This is exemplified by the fact that the DHS and Senate Republicans have very different fiscal estimates as to what would happen if these services were privatized. Hardiman and the DHS will continue comparing their estimating methods to find answers to these questions, Bartlett said.

Budget Office Spokesman Greg **BIRD** agreed that the privatization is the main issue in this budget.

"Obviously we do want to see the process continue to move," Bird said. "This is not something the governor had proposed in her budget and we do have concerns about the privatization issue in this respect. I assume this is one of the many issues that various workgroups have been discussing."

Bartlett said they haven't been given a concrete deadline as to when they need to move the DHS budget out of committee.

Hardiman has said that he thinks the budget can be ready to go either this week or next, Bartlett said. Obviously, chances of it moving this week are slim since the meeting was canceled.

Bartlett said he thinks Hardiman wants to move the budget with the privatization piece.

"I think Sen. Hardiman would at least appeal to Sen. Ron **JELINEK** (R-Three Oaks) to say, 'Let me advance the privatization proposal,'" Bartlett said. "I think Sen. Hardiman would still desire to put his proposal forward."



## Influential Michigan women will be honored

May 15, 2007

The Michigan Women's Foundation salutes five Michigan women Wednesday evening at the 18th Annual Women of Achievement and Courage Celebration at the GM Wintergarden at the Renaissance Center in Detroit.

The honorees are: Birgit M. Klohs, president of the Right Place Inc.; Gail Perry-Mason, first vice president of Investments at Oppenheimer & Company Inc.; the Honorable Anna Diggs Taylor, senior federal judge, U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, and Marianne Udow, director of the Michigan Department of Human Services.

Marjorie Beth Goebel, a champion for women and girls, a grassroots organizer and ardent advocate for the rights of abused and neglected children, will receive MWF's Trillium Award for Lifetime Achievement.

The event gets under way at 5 p.m. with cocktails, a strolling supper and a silent auction. The program begins at 7:15 p.m. Individual tickets are \$150. For reservations and information, call 800-404-4372.

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